NEW LIGHT ON THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF AVERROËS

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Averroës once spoke very sharply about al-Ghazzālī, even going so far as to accuse him of changing allegiances to suit the occasion or, as we might say, of trying to be all things to all people.[1] However appropriate the accusation may have been in that controversy, it inevitably comes back to haunt its author whenever the secondary literature about his thought is considered. Indeed, were Averroës to be judged solely on the basis of the secondary literature, he would necessarily be found guilty of having completely succeeded in doing that of which he accused al-Ghazzālī. The extent to which the secondary literature accuses Averroës of having tried to be all things to all people is especially evident in the scholarly debates about whether he should be considered more a disciple of Aristotle or of Neoplatonic thought, as well as in the great controversy about his religious standing—i.e., whether he is to be classed among those faithful to the tenets of Islam or among the unfaithful.

Behind these controversies lie questions of major significance to students of Islamic philosophy, but heretofore arguments that Averroës was primarily an Aristotelian have been largely limited to the well-known fact that he commented very extensively on most of Aristotle's works and highly praised the Stagirite for his acute perception. Consequently, little attention has been given to the fact that Averroës saw nothing inconsistent in his attempt to complete his statement about politics by writing a commentary on Plato's *Republic* rather than on Aristotle's *Politics*. Precisely because he considered a kind of harmony to exist between Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and Plato's *Republic,* a harmony similar to the one existing between Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and his *Politics,* the claims that Averroës may have been more partial to one of the two Greek philosophers or to a particular school interpretation of them become less important than an investigation of how he thought it possible to harmonize these authors and books.[2] Similarly, now that more is known about the logical writings of Averroës and his concern about speaking in different ways to different people is more thoroughly recognized, the arguments about his standing as a Muslim must give way to deeper questions about his thoughts concerning the relation between religion and politics. In his logical writings Averroës explained that the reason for the distinctions in speech was his awareness of the importance of speech to political

community, as well as his awareness that preservation of the political community was an essential requisite for decent human life. Consequently, it is necessary to wonder whether those works heretofore most consulted by scholars to determine his religious orthodoxy (i.e., *The Decisive Treatise* and *The Destruction of the Destruction)* are representative of his deepest thoughts on religion (or, more precisely, on the relation between reason and revelation) or whether they have a more limited and specifically political goal. By his own admission, these works were addressed to a general audience and used arguments appropriate to such an audience. The question of his religious orthodoxy thus depends on a better appreciation of his understanding of the way in which religion is taught to a people and how it affects political life.

It appears, then, that previous scholarly concerns really require a better understanding of why Averroës thought the political community to be essential to decent human life. They also seem to point to the question of what way he thought it should be ordered to bring about such an end, as well as how he thought the philosophy of Aristotle and Plato were in agreement about these issues. His most explicit political writings (the *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Commentary on Plato's Republic)* not only raise these issues; by their very subject matter they promise to clarify them.

According to Averroës, his *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* presents his teaching about the first or theoretical part of politics, and his *Commentary on Plato's Republic* presents his teaching about the second or practical part. When introducing the reader to the second, and admittedly more public, part of this teaching, Averroës explained the reason why he divided his political teaching into two parts. Although politics is to be classed among the practical sciences because of the nature of its subject matter and basic principles, as well as because of the nature of its end, there is a somewhat theoretical part of politics. That somewhat theoretical part is concerned with the general issues on which individual political actions are based, just as other practical arts have a somewhat theoretical side in addition to their simply practical function. For Averroës, medicine was the best example of this mixture of theory and practice in explicitly practical arts. Once the general view of the subject matter and basic principle of politics was presented, it was possible to understand how politics might be practiced, i.e., what should be done so that the end discovered in the theoretical part of the science could be brought about in fact.[3] What these general remarks mean for an understanding of the political thought of Averroës can best be determined by taking a closer look at his description of that theoretical part of politics.

Although quite faithful to the order of Aristotle's book, Averroës' *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* is much more explicitly political than Aristotle's text. This more explicitly political teaching was presented by subtle changes in the emphasis of Aristotle's argument. For example, when

Aristotle argued that the hierarchy which one can discern in arts, inquiries, practical pursuits, and choices insofar as each aims at some end suggests that all things aim at some end and that the end which would be most able to control other ends would be most desirable, Averroës concurred. Similarly, Averroës agreed with Aristotle's conditional argument about politics being the art which furnishes the end most desirable for its own sake. The argument for both was that if the political art orders all the activities pursued in a city, and if all activities seek some end, the political art must order all the other activities in such a way as to bring about a greater and more desirable end than any one of them might be able to bring about. However, this very agreement provides the grounds for the beginning of a basic disagreement. Whereas Aristotle subsequently remained silent about the political implications of that conditional argument and concentrated his efforts upon the search for the most desirable end, Averroës refused to allow those political implications to remain silently implicit. Thus, he insisted throughout his commentary that the major purpose of the speech about ethics was governance of the city in general and, more specifically, the good to be sought in such governance.[4]

In a similar manner, he followed Aristotle's method in searching for a determination of the most desirable end, or happiness, but was much more explicit than Aristotle when confessing the limits imposed upon this particular quest by the context in which it took place—i.e., a political or practical context. Thus, when Aristotle mentioned the tentativeness of such a study and cautioned the reader against expecting too much in the way of demonstrable answers, Averroës emphasized the limits of the inquiry even more strongly and told the reader where a fuller discussion of the subject could be found. That is, he explained that a fuller discussion of the most desirable end belonged to an inquiry as theoretical as logic or first philosophy, i.e., metaphysics. Unlike Aristotle, Averroës explicitly stated the reasons why the problems connected with ultimate happiness could not be fully examined in this book on moral habits: this book has a practical goal and therefore contains logical premises which are more general and less demonstrable than those used in explicitly theoretical books; any student of the logical arts was expected to recognize the necessary limitations on practical arts and thus to understand the limitations of this book.[5] In general, then, Averroës seized upon the political character of Aristotle's ethical teaching and ordered his comments around that political character. At one point, he even went so far as to insist, despite Aristotle's silence on the matter, that what was under discussion in the treatise was nothing less than the most noble art: that of ruling a city.[6]

Averroës' loquacity about things concerning which Aristotle was silent must be contrasted with his silence about things concerning which Aristotle was loquacious. For instance, despite numerous references by Aristotle to the divine character of happiness, Averroës never seized the opportunity to

speak about the happiness peculiar to citizens in a community enlightened by revealed religion, nor did he mention the happiness of the life to come.[7] In fact, when Aristotle spoke about the opinions men held about whether happiness was something which must extend beyond death and treated the subject as something which was a matter of utter speculation, Averroës treated the matter in the very same way. Even more surprising to a reader who might expect Averroës to have been intent on pointing out how Islamic teaching altered Aristotle's ideas is that Averroës made no attempt to go beyond Aristotle's thoughts about whether the actions of the living could affect the happiness of the dead. Instead, he commented on Aristotle's reasons and suggested their correctness solely on the basis of what is known to unassisted human reason.[8] Nowhere in his *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* is there evidence that Averroës believed it necessary to modify Aristotle's general statements about happiness in the light of anything peculiar to his time or place. In short, Averroës presented his comments as though addressed to a man who wanted to know about the highest, practical questions he might consider when trying to decide how to rule a city.

Differently stated, for Averroës the theoretical part of politics was supposed to teach that political rule should be directed to the happiness of the citizens, and it contained some general indications of what the elements of that happiness might be. That happiness was apparently a happiness of this life alone. More importantly, as presented in the theoretical part of politics, happiness seemed to be a result of training and to be directed to practice. It was no more a happiness of intellectual development than it was the happiness of another life. Thus, even though it was admitted that intellectual happiness or contemplation might be the highest kind of happiness, the book containing the presentation of the theoretical part of politics limited the presentation of happiness to a discussion of the kind of happiness attainable by most people; the discussion of contemplative happiness was explicitly assigned to another book, just as the discussion of how to bring about the kind of happiness attainable by most people was assigned to another book. If anything, Averroës was much more emphatic about excluding a consideration of contemplative happiness from the theoretical statement of politics than he was about excluding a consideration of the happiness pertinent to the other life. Whereas his ideas about the latter kind of happiness can be gathered only from whatever significance is attached to his silence about the matter, he explicitly relegated the discussion of contemplative happiness to other kinds of discussion.

Similar instances of unexpected loquacity and silence occur in the discussion devoted to Aristotle's views about natural law. Although Averroës followed the basic thread of Aristotle's explanations, even to the extent of agreeing that sacrifices represented conventional aspects of justice, he said nothing to

suggest that natural law might have some affinity to divine law. More importantly, Averroës completely overlooked Aristotle's suggestion that the justice of the gods might everywhere be the same even if the justice of man admits of variety.[9] This does not mean that Averroës set out to neglect all of Aristotle's references to divine matters, but it does suggest that he was more concerned about examining the general significance of Aristotle's ideas than he was about applying these ideas to the generally received opinions of a particular community. As a consequence he did not strive to make an explicit correction of Aristotle's explanations which reflected pagan theology or Greek convention, though he often corrected those remarks without alluding to Aristotle's error. For example, when Aristotle spoke about justice as something basically human because it implied having no more than a proper amount of just things, whereas the gods could presumably never have too much of just things, Averroës suggested a different reason for justice being a basically human concept: namely, there is a certain limit to the amount of justice men might achieve since there is a different order of justice typical of divinity which men can never attain. Again, in trying to decide whether a man could treat himself unjustly, Aristotle pointed out that even though suicide was something not expressly permitted by the law, a man who committed suicide would have to be called unjust since whatever the law did not expressly permit, it prohibited. Although Averroës followed Aristotle's general argument closely, he simply ignored the involved reasoning regarding suicide and explained that suicide was unjust because it was prohibited by the law; as a result, he had to put suicide into a category of unjust acts other than the category denoted by Aristotle.[10]

To be sure, part of the reason for Averroës' failure to make explicit his correction of such explanations by Aristotle and for his reluctance to point out the minor differences in interpretation arising from Aristotle's distinct theology must derive from Averroës' concern about his whole philosophical project. In trying to make Greek philosophy better known to fellow Muslims and in his own personal acceptance of Greek philosophy, he always had to be wary of the claim that the ways of the Greeks were so different from those of the Muslims that nothing at all could be learned from them and that no steadfast Muslim should place faith in Greek teachings.[11] Still, such a practical consideration explains at best only a certain terseness in Averroës' style; it does not at all account for any of his attempts to extend Aristotle's remarks. Only Averroës' conviction that the teaching presented in the *Nicomachean Ethics* constituted the theoretical part of the practical art of politics can explain his liberal expansion of Aristotle's remarks.

Throughout the *Nicomachean Ethics,* the goal of Aristotle's inquiry was that end at which all arts and sciences, and especially the most authoritative arts and sciences, aim. Because politics appeared to be the most authoritative

art, the art which directed the activities of all the other arts and sciences, its end seemed to be identical with the end to which the inquiry was directed. At least that is the way matters appeared to him at the start. However, as the inquiry progressed, it became increasingly evident that there was a difference between the ultimate end to which some men could aspire and the end which the political art sought to bring about. In part the investigation of the intellectual virtues contributed to this conclusion, for it became clear in that investigation that prudence was subordinate to theoretical wisdom, i.e., that theoretical wisdom was of a higher order than prudence. Since prudence was the intellectual virtue of the political art, the art of politics would have to be considered to be of a lower order than the art whose virtue was theoretical wisdom. Neither Aristotle nor Averroës did more than suggest these consequences until the discussion turned to the consideration of ultimate happiness. Once it became evident that contemplation was more likely to be ultimate happiness because it represented the best kind of activity, the end of politics could no longer be said to be identical with that highest goal—the activity of the political art being quite different from contemplative activity.

Still, properly directed, the activity of the political art could be in accordance with, and foster, excellence. The excellence so fostered also had the advantage of being more readily accessible to most human beings. Aristotle was concerned at the end of his inquiry to indicate how that excellence, moral virtue, could be engendered in others. In order to examine that question, he reflected on the force of law. The conditional argument which provided the grounds for his turn from the investigation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* to that of the *Politics* was: "surely he who wants to make men, whether many or few, better by his care must try to become capable of legislating, if it is through laws that we can become good." Support for acceptance of that condition had been prepared by the immediately preceding consideration of how virtue might best be fostered, a consideration which ended by placing heavy emphasis on the good effect of habituation backed by some kind of necessity or force.[12] So there was a strong implication, but only an implication, that Aristotle intended to study the art of legislation in order to learn how men could be made good, i.e., in order to discover what laws would be most apt to engender in citizens the kind of habits that lead to moral virtue. There was no implication that Aristotle considered the inquiry begun in the *Nicomachean Ethics* to represent the theoretical part of the subsequent investigation; it seemed, rather, that one incidental aspect of the earlier inquiry—how men could be trained in moral virtue—raised questions which could only be answered by looking more carefully at the legislative art.

The difference between Averroës and Aristotle arises in part from the fact that Averroës did not at all think Aristotle's turn from the discussion of

the *Nicomachean Ethics* to the *Politics* was based on a conditional syllogism. Because it appeared to him to be so obvious that men could be made good only by laws, he was persuaded that in the *Politics* Aristotle intended to answer the very practical question of which laws would make men good.[13] However, Averroës was of the opinion that Aristotle's pursuit of such a practical question followed directly from the conclusion reached by the theoretical investigation of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. That is, Averroës did not consider the inquiry into the legislative art as a pursuit of problems which arose incidentally. To him, the problem of training men in moral virtue had guided the whole inquiry of the *Nicomachean Ethics,* even though it had become an explicit problem only towards the end of the book. The *Nicomachean Ethics* constituted the theoretical part of the political art because the investigation presented in that book resulted in general ideas about moral virtue and explained how the cultivation of moral virtue was intimately related to the political art. Once these general ideas had been set forth, it was the task of the practical part of the political art to investigate particular instances in which they might be applied.

That Averroës held this opinion about what Aristotle had done in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and intended to do in the *Politics* explains why he was so much more outspoken than Aristotle about the limits of the inquiry and about the necessity of investigating contemplative happiness by other sciences. That is, because he perceived the purpose of the *Nicomachean Ethics* as distinctly political, he was intent upon removing any considerations which would detract from that political purpose.[14] Nonetheless, that Averroës assigned contemplative happiness to a different kind of investigation, does not imply that it had no relation to the happiness attained in political life. To the contrary, he argued that the investigation into the legislative art would be guided by the intellectual virtue of theoretical wisdom rather than by prudence—an opinion virtually without support from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics,* but which is grounded on Averroës' argument that the basic difference between theoretical and practical arts arises from differences in the subject matter and the purposes of the investigation rather than from the intellectual virtue directing the inquiry into these different arts.[15] The significance of his argument that theoretical wisdom would guide the investigation into the legislative art is that the very intellectual virtue which was said to lead to contemplative happiness is also supposed to indicate the substance of political happiness. In other words, the difference between the happiness which most men could ultimately hope to attain by virtuous conduct in a political community and that which a few men could ultimately hope to attain by contemplation need not be construed as a qualitative difference. Thus, while the presentation of Aristotle's teaching about happiness in the *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* is very secular, it prepares the more particularly Islamic presentation of happiness of the *Commentary on Plato's Republic*.[16]

Indeed, when Averroës presented what he called the practical part of his political teaching, he did not at all hesitate to remind the reader of the crucial difference separating the author of the commentary and the author of the original text in time and place. Many of the general observations arrived at in the theoretical part of his political teaching were modified in the discussion of the practical part by conventions of which he was acutely aware.[17] In addition to these explicit references to particular circumstances which indicate how general ideas would be modified in their application, Averroës' *Commentary on Plato's Republic* is marked by an emphasis on the educational task of the ruler. That is, Averroës interpreted Plato as having taught that the best ruler was a man with theoretical knowledge of practical matters who sought to instruct the populace by rhetorical and poetical speech. Such an interpretation enabled him to argue that the ruler of an actual political community must be able to speak in different ways to different people and ought to have a knowledge of political matters based on something other than practical wisdom.

However, Aristotle's decision to investigate the legislative art was partly due to doubt about the effectiveness of mere speech for training citizens in moral virtue. As Averroës noted, Plato also saw the need for something more than speech if citizens were to be trained in moral virtue. In all respects, then, Averroës' interpretation of Plato's *Republic* corresponds to the demands of the practical part of politics. It also seems to be a natural sequel to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, if Averroës' argument about theoretical wisdom guiding practical wisdom can really be attributed to Aristotle. But since it is generally known that Aristotle did not accept that argument in the *Politics*, Averroës' attempted substitution must be rejected. Such a rejection, while concluding the present discussion, poses an important question for all students of Averroës' political teaching: in what way does it make sense to say that theoretical wisdom can guide practical matters?

NOTES

[1] Averroës, *Kitāb Faṣl al-Maqāl (The Decisive Treatise)*, ed. George F. Hourani (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1959), pp. 17:21–18:4 (pages and lines cited according to Mueller's *editio princeps*, as reproduced in the margins of Hourani's edition).

[2] Cf. Averroës, *Commentary on Plato's Republic*, ed. and trans. E.I.J. Rosenthal (Cambridge: University Press, 1966), I.i.8 (i.e., First Treatise, Chapter One, Section Eight, according to Rosenthal's divisions):

"The first part of this art [of Politics] is contained in Aristotle's book known as *Nicomachea*, and the second part in his book known as *Politics*, and in Plato's book also upon which we intend to comment. For Aristotle's *Politica* has not yet come into our hands."

It is also important to consider the relation Averroës perceived between the two works

before he began to comment on Plato's *Republic*. Cf. Averroës, *in Libros Decem Moralium Nicomachiorum Expositio*, in *Aristotelis Opera cum Averrois Commentariis* (Venice: Apud Junctas, 1562), Vol. 3, folio 160 G-H:

"Et hic explicit sermo in hac parte huius scientiae: et est ea quae habet se in scientia civili habitudine notitiae, quid est sanitas et aegritudo in arte medicinae: et illa, quam promisit, est pars quae habet se in hac scientia habitudine effectivae sanitatis et destructivae aegritudinis in medicina. et est in libro eius, qui nominatur liber de regimine vitae: et nondum pervenit ad nos, qui sumus in hac insula: quemadmodum non pervenerant ad nos primitus de isto libro, nisi primi quatuor tractatus, donec perduxit eum ad nos amicus noster vir nobilis dominus Omar filius Martini, rogatu amicorum suorum, et Deus retribuat ei pro nobis regratiationem completam. Et fortassis erit aliquis amicorum, qui adducat librum, in quo est complementum huius scientiae, si Deus voluerit. Apparet autem ex sermone Abyn arrim Alfarabii [i.e., Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī], quod inventus est in illis villis. Si vero hoc non contingcrit, et Deus contulerit inducias vitae, perscrutabimur de hac intentione juxta mensuram nostri posse. Nam ex sermone Philosophi apparet in hoc loco, quod quod est in libro Platonis de regimine vitae, incompletum est, et videtur quod sic se habeat res in seipsa, nam in illo libro perscrutatur Plato duobus modis hominum tantum, et sunt conservatores et sapientes. deinde ostendit, quommodo permutantur civitates simplices ad seinvicem. Sed perscrutatio artificialis exigit ut rememorentur leges, et fori communes civitatibus simplicibus: deinde rememoretur post hoc, quod appropriatur singulis civitatibus ex eis, intendo quod appropriatur aggregationi nobili honorabili, et aliis aggregationibus. Et similiter rememoretur quod impedit universas aggregationes, et quod impedit modos singulos ex ipsis: et inquirantur exempla huius in vita inventa in illo tempore. et hoc est illud, ad quod innuit Aristotelis hic, et est res quae non completur in libris Plato. Qualiter igitur dixit Albubekrim filius aurificis [i.e., Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ṣā'igh or Ibn Bājjah] quod locutio de aggregatione nobili iam expedita erat in libro Platonis, et quod loquetur de eo in quo iam locutum est, dummodo inveniatur, est superfluitas, aut ignorantia, aut malitia. veruntamen non pervenerat ad ipsum complementum istorum tractuum. Et ego quidem explevi determinationem istorum tractatuum quarto die Jovis mensis, qui Arabice dicitur Ducadatim anno Arabum, Dlxxii. Et grates Deo multae de hoc. Dixit translator. Et ego complevi eius translationem ex Arabico in Latinum tertio die jovis mensis Junii, anno ab incarnatione Domini, Mcclx. apud urbem Toletanam, in capella sanctae trinitatis, unde sit benedictum nomen Domini, qui est trinus et unus.

[3] Averroës, *Commentary on Plato's Republic*, I.i.1–7, I.i.9–I.iii.5; also Averroës, *Moral. Nic. Expos.*, 160G.

[4] Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1094a 1–15, 1094a 27–1094b 11, 1102a 7–26, 1145a 6–12; Averroës, *Moral. Nic. Expos.*, 1H–K, 2C–G, 3F, 8I, 12F, 16M–17C, 93E–F.

[5] Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1096b 7, 1097a 12, also 1142a 12–19; Averroës, *Moral. Nic. Expos.*, 7B–C, 7E, 7G, 9M–10A, also 87L–M.

[6] Ibid., 8H–I.

[7] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1099b 11–18, 1177a 12–18, 1177b 27–1178a 8, 1178b 8–32; Averroës, *Moral. Nic. Expos.*, 12D–F, 153 D–E, 153M–154D, 155M–156D, 156G–H.

[8] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1100a 10–1101a 21, 1101a 23–1101b 8; Averroës, *Moral. Nic. Expos.*, 13H–14I, 15A–E.

[9] Aristotlc, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1134b 18–29; Averroës, *Moral. Nic. Expos.*, 73M–74E.

[10] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1137a27–31, 1138a 4–13, and cf. also 1139b 10–11, 1140b 8–19; Averroës, *Moral. Nic. Expos.*, 78D, 80C–E, and cf. also 82L, 84K–M.

[11] Cf. Averroes, *Kitāb Faṣl al-Maqāl*, 3:18–4:6.

[12] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1180b 23–25 and 1179b 20–1180b 13. The citation is from the translation of W.D. Ross: *Ethica Nicomachea* in *The Works of Aristotle Translated into English*

(Oxford: University Press, 1949) vol. 9.

[13] Averroës, *Moral. Nic. Expos.* 159 I: "Et ex quo necessarium est ei, qui vult efficere per regimen et gubernationem aliquos meliores, quam sint sive multos, sive paucos, ut sit lator legum: cum per legem quidem bonum faciamus." Cf. also 158L–159G. St. Thomas read Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1180b 23–25 in the same way as Averroës; cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *In Decem Libros Ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nicomachum Expositio*, ed. R.M. Spiazzi (Turin: Editrice Marietti, 1964), pars. 2179–2180 with 2153–2154 and 2163.

[14] Cf. *supra*, pp. 118–20.

[15] Averroës, *Moral. Nic. Expos.*, 1591 K; *Commentary on Plato's Republic*, I.i.2–4, I.i.10, I.iii.7.

[16] Averroës, *Commentary on Plato's Republic*, I.x.8, I.xi.7, and II.xvi. 10 with I.vii. 1–4, Ix.1, I.x.3–4, and I.xii.6. To Agree with printed text

[17] Ibid., I.vii. 11, I.viii.4, I.xi.3, I.xii. 7-11, I.xiiA.3, I.xiiA.9–10, I.xiv.4–5, and *passim*. Cf. also I.viii.1 with *Moral. Nic. Expos.*, 79C–G.

APPENDIX II: ARABIC GLOSSARY

Words listed are those which appear without a translation in any of the articles. Book titles are not included. The order is Latin alphabetical, ignoring the sign ʿ for Arabic ʿ*ayn*.

ʿ*ajam*, foreigners, contrasted with Arabs
ʿ*aql*, intellect
aṣl, pl.*uṣūl*, root; principle of a science
falsafa, philosophy
fanāʾ, passing away; obliteration of normal consciousness through absorption in thought of God
farʿ, pl.*furūʿ*, branch; detail of a science, contrasted with a principle
faylasūf, pl.*falāsifa*, philosopher
fiqh, Islamic law as a science
ḥadīth, conversation; oral and written Traditions of Islam
ḥakīm, wise man; scientist, philosopher
ḥikma, wisdom; science, philosophy
ʿ*ilm*, pl.ʿ*ulūm*, science, knowledge
ʿ*irfānī*, gnostic
ishrāqī, illuminationist
istidlāl, proof by induction
kalām, Islamic theology
kitāb, book
mamlaka(t), kingdom, realm
mashshāʿī, Peripatetic
mawjūd, existent
naẓar, vision; theoretical study
risāla, treatise
tafsīr, commentary
ṭarīqa, (*tariqat*), way; Ṣūfī order
ʿ*ulūm*, see ʿ*ilm*
umma, nation; community of Islam
uṣūl, see *aṣl*
wujūd, existence